



FACT SHEET

BLM-MONTANA/DAKOTAS

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Miles City Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision

FACT SHEET: Master Leasing Plan

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Master Leasing Planning and Criteria

A Master Leasing Plan (MLP) is a mechanism for addressing additional planning, management alternatives and analysis that may be necessary for areas meeting certain criteria. An MLP area is identified prior to oil and gas lease issuance. While not as detailed as a master development plan, an MLP does identify varying mitigation levels and management options for un-leased areas, but at a less site-specific level than would typically be conducted during a master development plan that has been fully defined by the operators. The preparation and consideration of an MLP is required when all four of the following criteria are met:

- A substantial portion of the area to be analyzed in the MLP is not currently leased;
- There is a majority Federal mineral interest;
- The oil and gas industry has expressed a specific interest in leasing, and there is a moderate or high potential for oil and gas confirmed by the discovery of oil and gas in the general area; and
- Additional analysis or information is needed to address likely resource or cumulative impacts if oil and gas development were to occur where there are:
 - o Multiple-use or natural/cultural resource conflicts;
 - o Impacts to air quality;
 - o Impacts on the resources or values of any unit of the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuge, or National Forest wilderness areas, as determined after consultation or coordination with the NPS, the USFWS or the USFS; or
 - o Impacts on other specially designated areas.

Master Leasing Planning within the Miles City Draft RMP

An MLP has been proposed for an area within a portion of Carter County. The area is approximately 393,000 acres in size, containing 139,000 acres of BLM-administered surface; 229,000 acres of private land; and 25,000 acres of state land. The BLM administers approximately 282,500 acres of oil and gas with 3,678 acres currently leased within the proposed MLP. This area is within the Powder River Basin and contains both high potential and low potential for oil and gas development.

The proposed MLP would expand the tools available to the BLM to address resource conflicts prior to leasing and present a fine scaled analysis for identified smaller areas than the entire RMP planning area. It can help to control the amount and kind of surface uses based upon current conditions and identified conflicts between resource values and leasing. Resources found in the proposed MLP area include Greater Sage-Grouse habitat and leks, raptor nests, a Great Blue Heron rookery, big game crucial winter range, sensitive soils, riparian areas, major streams, uranium, paleontological localities and cultural resource sites.

Table 1: Miles City Draft RMP/EIS MLP and associated management actions by alternative.

Miles City Draft RMP/EIS - Master Leasing Plan					
Summary of Alternatives					
Oil & Gas					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Closed	0 acres	250,000 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres
NSO	6,800 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	250,000
Timing/CSU	220,000 acres	36,000 acres	282,500 acres	150,000 acres	37,400 acres
Lease Terms	180,000 acres	5 acres	0 acres		5 acres